

# MARINES SAVED ROUNDS



## More Money Sought for Families of Fallen Marines

By Gerry J. Gilmore, AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE, Washington

**P**entagon leaders and Capitol Hill legislators want to increase the current available combined government death benefit for families of fallen Marines and other service members by about \$250,000.

If enacted, the proposed change would nearly double the \$262,000 now available to families of service members killed in wartime operations, said David S.C. Chu, undersecretary of defense for personnel

and readiness, in his testimony Feb. 1 before the Senate Armed Services Committee. The issue has been under study for two years.

Senior defense leaders believe the sum should be nearer to \$500,000, Chu told the panel. The increase would come by increasing the maximum coverage offered by the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program and raising the separate death gratuity payment.

The current survivor's death gratuity payment, which is tax-free, is about \$12,420. Additionally, survivors of service members killed in war operations can now receive \$250,000 in maximum SGLI coverage.

Department of Defense and Senate proposals would increase the death gratuity payment to \$100,000, and boost maximum SGLI coverage to \$400,000. The Pentagon would pay the pre-

miums for the extra \$150,000 in SGLI coverage when participating service members are deployed in a combat zone.

A plan under discussion, if approved by Congress and the president, would be retroactive to Oct. 7, 2001, the day Operation Enduring Freedom began in Afghanistan.

The proposed increase in survivor's monetary benefits would also provide "greater recognition" of the sacrifices America's service members have made during the global war on terrorism, noted Sen. John Warner of Virginia, chairman of the SASC. DoD officials reported Feb. 1 that 1,415 Americans have died in Iraq and 156 others died in Afghanistan and other wartime theaters during the global war on terror.

"There is nothing in the financial sense that we can do to replace a lost service member," Chu said. Yet, the government can provide "the appropriate financial tools," to comfort surviving spouses and families so they can go forward. **M**

## Foreign Service Officers Needed

Compiled by Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington

**T**hink you have what it takes to be a U.S. diplomat? Registration for the 2005 Foreign Service Written Exam is now open. The exam measures candidates' knowledge of the subjects necessary for performing the tasks required of foreign service officers.

The exam is free and is comprised of multiple-choice questions that cover such areas as the structure and workings of the U.S. government, psychology, American

culture, management and finance. The exam includes a job knowledge section, an English usage section, a biographic inventory, and an essay exercise.

Candidates must be U.S. citizens between 20 and 59 years old, and be available for worldwide assignment.

Visit [www.careers.state.gov/officer/join/examinfo.html](http://www.careers.state.gov/officer/join/examinfo.html) for information on how to register and where to find the testing center nearest you. **M**



## Operation Cares for Military Children

Compiled by Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington

**A**n initiative launched March 3 offers childcare assistance to National Guard, reserve and active duty military families with service members serving in the Global War on Terror.

The initiative, dubbed Operation: Military Child Care, will provide financial relief and assistance locating quality childcare for eligible military families who do not have access to the Department of Defense on-base childcare options. The program will serve families and child guardians of service members mobilized or deployed for GWOT.

The joint effort between DoD and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral

Agencies will be administered by NACCRRA.

"It can be a challenge for any parent to locate affordable, quality childcare in their community," said Linda Smith, executive director of NACCRRA.

"For the spouse of a deployed Guard or reserve service member who may now be looking at a reduced income with a larger need for childcare support, the process can be even more overwhelming," she said. "Operation: Military Child Care will bridge the gap to provide affordable, quality child care options for these families."

The largest employer-supported childcare program in the nation, the DoD's childcare program serves more than

200,000 children. While the program has been hailed as a model of childcare quality, a large number of military families, particularly Guard and reserve, are not located near bases and need to find comparable care in their own communities.

A network of NACCRRA member agencies will walk families through the process of locating a qualified care provider. Once approved, NACCRRA will provide financial support directly to the provider on behalf of DoD, so that service members' fees can be reduced.

The amount of financial assistance will vary for each family and depend upon factors such as total family

income, geographical location, military services childcare fee policies and available funding, as well as certain family circumstances.

Eligible families can call the Child Care Aware hotline at 1-800-424-2246 or go online at [www.childcareaware.org](http://www.childcareaware.org) for help with applying for the subsidy and location assistance. **M**



## Beverage Company Offers Free Admission to Service Members

Compiled by Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington

**A**nheuser-Busch Cos. Inc. announced its "Heroes Salute" to honor the U.S. Armed Services by offering free single-day admission to its SeaWorld and Busch Gardens parks through Dec. 31, 2005.

"In our own small way, we're giving something back to the brave men and women and their families who make sacrifices every day for our country," said August A. Busch IV, president, Anheuser-Busch Inc. "As a saluteto America's heroes, we wish to extend a message of thanks and an invitation."

Any active duty, active reserve, ready reserve service member or National Guard is entitled to free admission under the program. He or she need only register, either online at [www.herosalute.com](http://www.herosalute.com), or in the entrance plaza of participating parks, and show a Department of Defense photo ID.

As many as three direct dependents of military personnel also are entitled to free admission. Dependents may take

advantage of the offer without their service member, though an adult must accompany minor dependents.

For more information, visit [www.anheuser-busch.com](http://www.anheuser-busch.com) **M**

